

TWENTY-FIRST

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

PHILADELPHIA

FEMALE ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.

---

PHILADELPHIA:  
MERRIHEW & THOMPSON'S STEAM POWER PRINTING OFFICE,  
Nos. 2 and 4, Merchant St.  
1855.

## REPORT.

The battle between Slavery and Freedom, in the United States, is thickening. There is no longer any doubt that it is to be a war of extermination of one by the other. Slavery, exultant in its power, is gathering all its forces, and, regardless of national honor or faith, of solemn compacts, or oath-bound treaties, as it has ever been of truth and justice, madly urges on the contest. On the other side, the Spirit of Liberty, aroused from its slumbers, and alarmed by the aggressions of its foe, resists and contests its progress, step by step. The repeal of the Missouri Compromise, regarded as a signal triumph on the part of the slave power, produced a strong reaction in favor of freedom, throughout the North. The northern press, even the northern pulpit, protested in words and tones of manly indignation, against this shameless violation of faith. Its first, and very natural, effect was to weaken confidence in all compacts between the North and the South, and to raise the cry, Away with all compromises with slavery! Let the battle be fought out, hand to hand, in an open field.

The strength of the feeling thus aroused, was tested and strikingly shown on the occasion of the arrest of Anthony Burns, a fugitive slave, in the city of Boston, in the month of May, 1854. The citizens of Massachusetts, burning with indignation, thronged the streets of Boston, and surrounded its Court-House, resolved to protect human liberty in the person of that outraged man. So determined was this opposition, that large forces of the Artillery and Infantry of the United States, with cannon loaded with grape-shot, and a hundred deputy Marshals, armed with cutlasses and revolvers, were required to carry one poor fugitive slave, from the soil of Massachusetts, into slavery. To accomplish this disgraceful deed, the United States government expended thirteen thousand dollars. Not from Massachusetts alone, but from almost every northern State, have been heard the threats of earnest men, never known as abolitionists, that the Compromises of 1850 shall be repealed by the people, though they may remain on the nation's statute books. In the month of June last, Judge Smith, of the Supreme Court of the State of Wisconsin, pronounced the Fugitive Slave Law *unconstitutional*, for the reasons: First, that Congress has no constitutional power to legislate on the subject of reclaiming fugitives; Second, nor to clothe Commissioners with the power to determine the liberties of the people; and, Third, because this act denies the right of trial by Jury. On this ground the Judge discharged S. M. Booth, who was arrested in Milwaukie for aiding the

escape of a fugitive slave. This decision was, shortly after, confirmed by the Supreme Court of the State in full bench. The voice of the Northern people, uttered in the elections of last Autumn, and in the official messages of some of their governors, has signally rebuked the treachery and dishonesty of the act which repealed the Missouri Compromise.

But those symptoms of rebellion and resistance against the slave power, encouraging signs of the times though they are, do not deceive the abolitionists who have led on this war against slavery, and who have fought its battles on various fields, but always with the same foe, though variously disguised. They have learned too well the strength and resources of the enemy against whom they contend, to suppose that these manifestations of restiveness on the part of the North are tokens of speedy victory. The government of this nation is in the hands of the slave power; and in the hands of the government are rewards enough for those who serve it well. The North may refuse to return to Congress the men who have so grossly betrayed its interests, but the government, with its bribes of office and of gold, for those who are ambitious of power or greedy of gain, can always buy a sufficient number of northern representatives to do its bidding. The history of our country shows how great and how extensive this power has been, and how rarely the government has been defeated when it proposed to accomplish any definite object for the promotion or protection of slavery.

We do not thence infer that the people of the North, generally, approve and love slavery ; but that they do not hate it intensely enough to be able to cope with it, under our Federal government. Evidence of this is found in the history of the anti-slavery political parties, which have been organized for the purpose of abolishing or preventing the extension of slavery. Numerical strength being absolutely necessary to their success, they have, in order to secure votes, or to present to the public an available candidate, yielded one principle after another, until, allured by false professions and promises, they have been merged in one of the large parties of the country, both of which are always loyal to the slave power, whatever may be the mask which it may suit them to wear for the nonce. Fully have these anti-slavery political parties proved that in their keeping the cause of Liberty is not safe ; that to them the slave cannot look for his redemption. Is there, then, any other power, which, apart and distinct from the government, might contend with it in a moral conflict, and, on this question of slavery, defeat it ? Every one, untaught by experience, naturally looks to the organized church of a Christian land to do such a work as this. And this work the American church could have done, and would have done, long ere this, and swept slavery forever from the land, had she not been false to the name of Christian, and to her continually reiterated professions before the world. The slavery of the United States has tested the character of the church of the

United States, and revealed to the world its hideous moral deformity. The church cries out in wrath against her accusers, and strives to divert the attention of the world from her own corruption to what she is pleased to term their infidelity; but the facts by which posterity will judge her, are simply these: that, professing to be the exponent and illustration of the teachings of Jesus Christ, in a nation where one sixth of the inhabitants are made the chattel slaves of the stronger class; denied the rights of marriage; denied the bible; denied the development of the intellect; subjected to every physical and mental torture which the avarice or cruelty of irresponsible masters may suggest; bought and sold in the market; and all this under the sanction of the law of the land, the American church has ranged herself, gives her immense power, her far-reaching influence, on the side of the oppressor. These terrible facts, known and read of all men who do not shut their eyes lest they should see them, will seal the doom of the church of this age, in the judgment of the first generation of posterity which shall fully awake from the paralyzing influences of American slavery. In vain does the church anathematise and excommunicate her accusers, while she cannot disprove their solemn charges. With a few exceptions, of individuals and small organizations, the great American Church, in all its divisions, utters no protest against the existence of an institution which robs millions of men of their dearest rights, which violates every command of the Decalogue, and every

principle of Christianity. More than this ; its leading men, its eminent ministers, write elaborate arguments in defense of this horrible system of oppression, and blaspheme the God of love, by declaring that He sanctions and blesses it. With professions of reverence for Christ, upon their lips, they deny Him by asserting that men ought to obey the Congress of the United States, when it commands them to do wrong, to violate the laws of God. And these monstrous utterances of practical atheism are received calmly and quietly by the American church. No burst of righteous indignation stamps them as treason to the Head of the Church, and hurls their authors from their high posts of honor and influence. They are the scorn of the haughty slaveholder, the derision of the bold slave-trader ; but the church sustains and honors them. The slaveholder, the buyer and seller "of slaves and souls of men," is admitted to her communion-table, and ushered into her pulpit, at the North, as well as the South, while the colored man, innocent of these crimes, who seeks to worship in her courts, is assigned to the negro pew or the negro bench, and condemned to endure the ill-concealed aversion of his white fellow-worshippers. She has no city of refuge, no sanctuary, for the flying bondman ; her very bible she hurls against him, when he comes to her for protection. She *does* "return unto his master, the servant who has escaped from his master," unto her ; ay, joins in the cry of his pursuers, and denounces, from her press and her pulpit, those who, moved

by his anguish, his danger and his helplessness, rush to his aid, and strive to deliver him out of the hands of his tormentors. Verily, on the side of the oppressor there is power !

And this is the church which claims to be Christ's representative on earth, and, in the name of God, demands the allegiance of men ! This church, which builds the sepulchres of the martyrs of another age, and arrests and imprisons the prophets whom God sends to this ! From such an institution we cannot hope for aid, in a conflict with the giant sin of our country.

It may be asked if there is any of hope for such aid, from a people in whose midst such a church and such a government have grown up ? Doubtless there is, for the hearts of the people always beat truer to liberty and the right, than their ecclesiastical and political leaders indicate. The masses of the Northern people know and feel that the men who, to-day, are under arrest as criminals, for violating the Fugitive Slave Law, really occupy a far higher moral position, than do those recreant clergymen and politicians who advocate and strive to enforce that odious and infamous statute. The Northern people do not love slavery, nor do they protect it, for its own sake ; but linked with it, under a government, the offices, honors, and more substantial rewards of which, are too tempting to be resisted, they basely sacrifice the rights of three millions of slaves, and, with them, their own consciences, for the sake of what they call their present interests.



Yet it cannot be that the spirit of freedom has utterly died in the hearts of the American people ; that it cannot be revived, and aroused to break the spell with which slavery has bound them. Our hope of the abolition of slavery, is based on our faith that the people of the North will, one day, dissolve their guilty and most impolitic union with slaveholders, and, establishing a government, under which slavery shall not exist, and consequently the offices, honors, and emoluments of which shall not be so many bribes in the hands of the slave power, shall set themselves free from the temptations to support an institution from which their better nature revolts. Thus will the North be emancipated from the sin of confederating with slaveholders ; and thus will the slaves be emancipated from their chains, by the withdrawal of the allies who have enabled their masters to hold them in bondage.

To convince the people of the North of the wisdom of this course, and of their obligation to pursue it, is the purpose of abolitionists. The means by which they seek to do this are those, and those only, on which they have ever relied in their conflict with slavery ; arguments and expostulation, addressed to the reason, the consciences, and the hearts of their fellow-citizens.

That portion of the labor of carrying on the anti-slavery enterprise, which devolves on this Society, has not been neglected, during the past year ; though we cannot claim that it has been performed with all the earnestness and diligence which such a cause demands.

The Society commenced the labors of the year just closed, by sending to Congress an earnest remonstrance against the passage of the Nebraska Bill, which was then under discussion by that body; and also, by petitioning our State Legislature to instruct our Congressional Senators, and to advise our Representatives, to vote against the bill. In the month of June, following the consummation of that bold perfidy on the part of Congress, the following resolution was adopted by this Society :

*“Resolved,* That we witness, with regret, the alarming evidence of national depravity, exhibited in the violation of the Missouri Compromise, and in the recent terrible executions of the Fugitive Slave Law, in Boston ; and that we regard them as incentives to more energetic labor in behalf of the cause of Freedom ; and that we do hereby pledge ourselves never to relax our efforts to abolish American Slavery, until our work is accomplished, or until death shall close our labors.”

The means which we have employed for the promotion of our enterprise have been those of former years. We have subscribed for ten copies of the *Liberator*, ten of the *National A. S. Standard*, ten of the *British A. S. Advocate*, and fifty of the *Pennsylvania Freeman*. These papers are circulated under the direction of a Committee of the Society, in such manner as may seem to them most conducive to the interests of our cause. In many instances, we believe, persons who have thus been supplied with one of them during a year, have been induced to become subscribers for it, or some other anti-slavery journal.

The most arduous part of the labors of this Society, is the annual Anti-Slavery Fair of Pennsylvania. Greatly assisted as the Society is, by numerous efficient coadjutors in the city and county, the principal labor of preparation and supervision, necessarily devolves upon its own members. In this department of effort, we have, during many years past, met with most encouraging success. The Report of our Fair Committee shows that the Fair of the last year, though not as productive as that of 1853, was successful beyond our expectations. The unusual and very great scarcity of money among our citizens, at the time of our Fair, and during several months previous, was a circumstance which could not fail very seriously to affect our receipts. Another disadvantageous circumstance, was the loss of our advertising medium, the Pennsylvania Freeman, which during the past year, has been merged in the National Anti-Slavery Standard. Although the columns of the National paper were ever open to the use of our Fair, it was of course impossible for our Committee to make them as available in its service as they could those of a local journal, published in our own city. In consideration of these circumstances, especially the former, we regard the pecuniary results of our recent Fair as highly encouraging.

In the review of the past year, we see many events which, as signs of the times, are truly cheering. Among these is the final abolition of slavery in Venezuela, which was consummated on the twenty-fourth day of March last. The announcement of such a triumph of liberty,

though in a distant land, quickens our pulses, and brightens our hopes of the coming of our own nation's day of jubilee. While we are waiting for that glorious day, which shall be dearer to American hearts, than is the birthday of the nation, many an earnest of its blessedness is granted us, in the sight of a fugitive who has escaped from the wrongs and horrors of slavery, and has safely reached our city, on his way to a land where the government will protect his rights. Weary, foot-sore, and wayworn, come these travelers; sometimes alone, sometimes in groups, the mother with her babe in her arms, and her husband by her side, too happy, that *together* they have escaped the pursuer; sometimes glad and strong of heart, forgetful of the terrible past, in their bright anticipations of the future; sometimes timid and sorrowful, afraid of the face of man, distrustful of proffered kindness, or tremulous with joy at the first, strange, words of sympathy from the white man's lips. Continually are they thronging northward, from the land to them accursed; and during their brief sojourn in our city, they move us to burning indignation against their wrongs, to tender pity for their sorrow, to grateful joy for their deliverance, and to shame for the humiliating fact that the soil of Pennsylvania is not free to their feet, that her laws are powerless to protect them, that their only safety is, still, in flight. More deeply are we humbled, more keenly do we feel the disgrace of our Northern States, when these heroic men or women,

who have braved incredible perils and suffering, by sea or by land, regarding the boon of liberty worth them all, are seized in our midst, and, by our own courts of *justice*, remanded to all the unutterable horrors from which they had escaped. Of such outrages, we are compelled to record the case of Edward Davis, a colored man, born free, who having transgressed the law of Maryland, relative to the entrance of free negroes into the state, was seized and fined for the offense. Being unable to pay the fine, he was thrust into prison, and afterward sold to pay his fine and jail fees. After enduring, for a few years, the hard lot of a slave, he determined to make a desperate effort to recover his lost birthright of liberty. He secreted himself under the guards of a Philadelphia steamer, the *Keystone State*, running between Philadelphia, and Macon, Georgia, and hoped thus to make the perilous voyage to the North. He was discovered in his hiding-place, and taken to Newcastle, where his freedom being fully proved, he was set at liberty; but was afterward recommitted on the oath of the infamous captain of the *Keystone State*, who swore that he believed him to be a fugitive from justice. He was, soon after, delivered up, by the U. S. Commissioner Guthrie, to his pretended owner, and doomed again to the terrible lot from which he had so heroically escaped. But his persecutors were baffled. The God of the oppressed sent His angel of death to open the captive's prison doors, and no United States Congress or Commissioner, could stay his hand.

Another case of recapture, and the last that has occurred in our city, is that of a man named Bright, who, trusting too confidently to the protection of Northern law, or Northern public sentiment, remained in Lancaster, after his escape from slavery, instead of securing his freedom by a flight to Canada. In his fancied security, he was arrested by some minions of the slave power, and conveyed, in haste, to Philadelphia ; and his rendition to slavery was one of the last official acts of the notorious Commissioner Ingraham.

While we mourn over these infamous deeds, we rejoice in the fact that they have become very unfrequent in our city ; while the number of fugitives who pass through it, on their way to a land of liberty, is rapidly increasing.

The review of every year, as it passes away, teaches us, if we will learn, solemn lessons, concerning the false and the true, the real and the unreal, in the pageant of life. And as each year rolls farther away, into the dim and silent past, it sends back to us the gift of a clearer vision to discern the true nature of the events, and the true character of the actors who made its history.

During the last year, there have passed away from our midst, two persons, whom our persecuted colored population, and the friends of the slave, will long remember. Of one of these it may be truly said, " When the ear heard her, then it blessed her ; and when the eye saw her, it gave witness to her ; because she delivered the

poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him." Of the other, "He turned aside the needy from judgment, and took away the right from the poor; and made widows his prey, and robbed the fatherless: His hands were full of bribes: and he made haste to betray the innocent." The cry of the fugitive slave was, in the ear of one, a call for truest sympathy and earnest aid; to the heart of the other, it appealed in vain. Into the face of one, the trembling outcast, persecuted for the color of his skin, looked with confidence and hope; from the presence of the other, he fled in terror. And, as they had lived, so they died. The one, having loved the down-trodden slaves, loved them unto the end; and within a few days of the close of her busy life, was actively engaged in efforts to redeem a family from bondage. And it may, in truth, be said, that she gave her life for the cause she loved, for in these, her last labors, she overtasked her physical strength, and caused the sickness which finished her earthly mission. The other left, for the world's remembrance, as one of the last official acts of his life, the returning into slavery, an innocent man who so loved liberty that he had braved the peril of his life in order to obtain it.

These have passed from the scenes of mortal life, to add another illustration to the truth, that "the memory of the just is blessed," and "the memory of the wicked shall rot." The name of the one will long be enshrined in the affectionate respect of true hearts; the name of the other will be saved from the execration of posterity

only by oblivion. The esteem in which the former was held by this Society, was unanimously expressed by the following Resolutions, adopted at its Meeting in November last.

*Resolved*, That in the death of Esther Moore the Anti Slavery cause has lost one of its truest and most earnest advocates, and our colored population, a warm-hearted and self sacrificing friend.

*Resolved*, That this Society, while it mourns over the death of one who assisted in its organization, and filled, for several years, its presidential office, rejoices in the blessed memory of the departed, whose ear was ever open to the cry of the fugitive slave, and whose long life of devotion to the cause of human freedom, admonishes us to do with our might, what our hands find to do, in behalf of the slave, and of our oppressed colored brethren."

In concluding our Report of the experience and the labors of another year, we heartily renew our confession of faith in the eternal principles which are the foundation of our enterprise. We are not discouraged, though the oppressor seems to triumph for a season ; and the rulers, taking counsel together, against the Lord, frame mischief by a law, and exalt themselves above the authority of God. Though new territory may be added to the domain of the slave power ; though even the descendants of the heroes of the Mayflower reward with honorable office the man who thrust Anthony Burns back into his prison-house of slavery, and suffer their government to arrest and imprison the noblest men who



tread their soil, for the crime of telling them the truth; though all this, and more than this, may confront our hopes and mock our efforts, we can not doubt of the final result. God is stronger than human governments; and He will, yet, be exalted in the earth." "God is our refuge and strength ; the cause which we advocate is His ; therefore will He lead it on to perfect victory, and " the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it."

## REPORT

OF THE

## NINETEENTH PENNSYLVANIA ANTI-SLAVERY FAIR.

The Nineteenth Annual Anti-Slavery Fair of Pennsylvania was held in the spacious saloon of Sansom Hall, commencing on Wednesday evening, December 6th, and continuing through the three following days.

The receipts were	.	.	.	.	2010.14
-------------------	---	---	---	---	---------

Expenses,	.	.	.	.	407.73
-----------	---	---	---	---	--------

---

Net profits,	.	.	.	.	1602.41
--------------	---	---	---	---	---------

It is with great satisfaction that the Committee report these results. Owing to the state of the money-market and the general depression in the business community, greatly diminished sales were apprehended; but the Committee are happy to state that the friends of the slave, even under these discouraging circumstances, were not unmindful of his claims—that the supply of goods was very liberal, and the greater part of them were sold at advantageous prices.

The tables of Bristol, Byberry, Chester Co. and Bucks Co. were furnished with their usual liberality and

taste. Beside these were two very handsome tables furnished by new Circles, in Camden and Germantown. A cheering evidence of a wider extended interest in our labors.

The contributions from manufacturers and merchants in the city were liberal, and donations were received from New York, Norristown, Downingtown, Maple Grove, Isabella Furnace, Abington; Milton, Lancaster Co.; Mullica Hill and Kaighn's Point.

Through our friends in Boston were also received valuable articles from England, Ireland and Germany.

With pleasure and interest we record that venerable friends—upwards of four score—on both sides of the Atlantic, sent beautiful articles of their own knitting.

The Committee would gratefully express their obligations to Wendell Phillips, Esq., of Boston, for the interest and value added to the Fair, by his two able addresses, delivered on Friday and Saturday evenings.

The success of the efforts, made this year, confirms the opinion that the annual labors in this department are very effective in maintaining and enlarging the anti-slavery influence in the community, and the Committee therefore urge to prompt and continued attention in preparing for the next Fair.

On behalf of the Committee,

SARAH PUGH.

HARRIET D. PURVIS.

*Philadelphia, January, 1855.*

## OFFICERS FOR THE ENSUING YEAR.

---

PRESIDENT,

SARAH PUGH.

VICE PRESIDENT,

SIDNEY ANN LEWIS.

RECORDING SECRETARY,

HANNAH L. STICKNEY.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY,

MARY GREW.

TREASURER,

MARGARET GRISCOM.

BOARD OF MANAGERS,

LUCRETIA MOTT,

MARTHA A. GALVIN,

LYDIA WHITE,

ABBY KIMBER,

MARGARETTA FORTEN,

MARIA M. DAVIS.